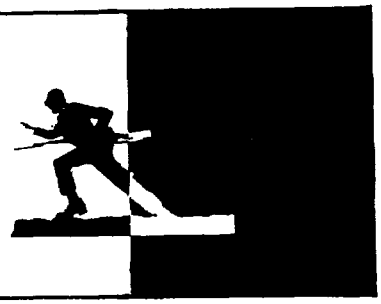
BOOK REVIEWS



Napoleon's Last Victory and the Emergence of Modern War. **By Robert M. Epstein. University Press of Kansas, 1994. 215 Pages. $29.95.** Reviewed by Dr. Charles E. White, Infantry School Historian.

The advent of "modern war" is the central focus of Robert Epstein's superb study of the Franco-Austrian War of 1809. The author contends that the scale and intensity of Napoleon's campaigns in Italy and Austria in 1809 produced conditions and methods reminiscent of warfare today. Epstein argues that "the emergence of modern war" thus began with this war.

This book is a refreshingly new interpretation of Napoleonic warfare. Building upon his previous study, *Prince Eugene at War: 1809*, Epstein examines the 1809 war in terms of evolving new systems of recruitment, organization, and battle command (as well as theater command). As the author convincingly shows, this was the first time two states confronted each other on the battlefield with massive, evenly matched armies, created by large-scale conscription, organized into corps, and coordinated along two major theaters of operation (Austria and Italy). As a result, both the French and the Austrians were forced into what Epstein calls "distributed maneuvers"; that is, the deployment of divisions and corps and their maneuvers throughout a theater of operations. This new style of warfare (similar to that found in the U.S. Civil War and subsequent conflicts) produced broad operational fronts in which battles became both sequential and simultaneous.

Interestingly, as Epstein points out, neither Napoleon nor Archduke Charles ever fully understood that a paradigm shift had occurred in the conduct of war. The reason they did not see this change is that perhaps 1809 was not the beginning of "modern warfare."

What happened in the Franco-Austrian War was theory finally being put into practice. Years before, enlightened soldiers in France, Prussia, and Austria had predicted warfare on the scale and intensity that occurred in 1809. In fact, many of the "new systems" both France and Austria employed in that year had already been introduced (but not put into practice) in the Prussian Army during the years of reform following its catastrophic defeat in 1806. Regardless, warfare would never be the same after 1809.

Robert Epstein is to be commended for writing a fine book that contributes significantly to an understanding of the development of modern army organizations, as well as battle command. The book is thus a thought-provoking study that provides valuable insights into the changing nature of warfare during the Napoleonic era. For anyone seeking to find the origins of "modern war," this work is a good starting point.

Bounden Duty: The Memoirs of a German Officer, 1932-45. **By Alexander Stahlberg. Translated by Patricia Crampton. Brassey's (UK), 1990. 410 Pages. $24.95.** Reviewed by Lieutenant Colonel Harold E. Raugh, Jr., U.S. Army.

The evil machinations of Adolf Hitler and his followers continue to fascinate historians, especially as the 50th Anniversary of World War II is being commemorated. The publication in English of Alexander Stahlberg's memoirs has provided a wealth of new and significant information.

Stahlberg was born in 1912 into a wealthy and influential Prussian family. At the end of 1932, while attending university in Berlin, he became "press consultant" to former Reich Chancellor Franz von Papen. While in this position, he was privy to the behind-the-scenes activities during January 1933 after which Hitler became Chancellor of Germany and Papen his deputy. Stahlberg later worked in his family business but remained aware of the political scene and volunteered to serve as a cavalry trooper in 1935-36 to avoid joining the Nazi Party. Recalled to active duty for a short period in 1938 and commissioned shortly thereafter as a reserve officer, Stahlberg later participated in the offensives into Poland, France, and the Soviet Union.

Upon the recommendation of a General Staff officer cousin (who, according to the author, was the chief organizer of the resistance to Hitler), Stahlberg became aide-de-camp, and later adjutant, to Field Marshal Erich von Manstein in 1942. He served Manstein in the Soviet Union (including during the encirclement of the German Sixth Army at Stalingrad), during the Battle of Kursk, and after Manstein was relieved in March 1944 until the end of the war. From this unrivaled vantage point, he accompanied Manstein to numerous conferences with Hitler, which he describes in exquisite detail, and was drawn into the fringe of the anti-Hitler conspiracy circle.

As indicated by its title, the main theme of the book was the inner conflict between duty and conscience experienced by Stahlberg, Manstein, and those army officers who opposed Hitler. Although it was recognized that Hitler was a criminal who would eventually destroy Germany, many officers, especially Manstein, were fettered by the strictures of ethical dogma and refused to do anything to save their nation, even when they learned of the government-sponsored campaign to destroy the Jews.

A case in point is the encirclement at Stalingrad. Manstein, as Commander-in-Chief, Army Group Don, believed he could have saved the Sixth Army, either by coordinating an attack to relieve the surrounded army, or by permitting it to break out of its encirclement. Since he had given his oath of loyalty to Hitler, however, he believed it was his duty to obey Hitler's unrealistic and ludicrous order for the Sixth Army to defend to the death the "stronghold" of Stalingrad and did nothing to save the hundreds of thousands of German soldiers.

The well-written and well-translated text is superbly supplemented by some three dozen photographs of episodes from the author's life that stress his World War II experiences. Six maps of significant German offensives provide easy-to-understand references.

This enthralling book offers further insight into the minds of the German Army officers during the Nazi regime and makes a significant contribution to military history.

The theme of loyalty to the sovereign power versus the limits of obedience is a thought-provoking and often disturbing issue. This book is difficult to put down once begun.

***Mao Tse-Tung on Guerrilla Warfare.* Translated by Samuel B. Griffith, II. Introduction to Second Edition by Arthur Waldon and Edward O'Dowd. The Nautical & Aviation Publishing Company of America, 1992. 168 Pages. $19.95.** Reviewed by Colonel Cole C. Kingseed, U.S. Army.

In this era of diminished superpower confrontation, the subject of revolutionary guerrilla warfare and low intensity conflict continues to fascinate military strategists and defense planners. This second edition of Mao's treatise on guerrilla warfare is destined to become a classic of military literature.

What makes this second edition so valuable to a U.S. audience is the introduction by Chinese scholars Arthur Waldon and Edward O'Dowd, which builds on both Mao's original essay and the introduction to the first edition by the translator, Marine Corps Brigadier General Samuel B. Griffith, II. The theme that dominates the book is the interaction between the development of guerrilla warfare in Asia and the reaction to it in the west.

Waldon and O'Dowd fault both Mao and Griffith for neglecting a possibly useful distinction between partisan and pure guerrilla warfare: In partisan warfare, irregular forces operate most effectively in coordination with conventional forces; without these main forces, partisans or guerrillas are far less effective. General Vo Nguyen Giap used this combination of North Vietnamese regular forces and Viet Cong guerrillas effectively in Vietnam; the Malaysian communists lost because they had neither conventional forces nor allies to support them. The authors of the introduction conclude that the recent collapse of communism removes the most reliable source of conventional forces for the would-be guerrilla forces and that pure revolutionary guerrilla war, as defined by Mao and Griffith, may become as rare as revolution itself.

Still, the world remains a dangerous place, with economic, social, and political instability likely to continue as nations search for modernity. In such struggles, irregular warfare and partisan activities have a place. And so long as they do, this book should be required reading for strategic planners and military officers involved in peacetime engagement activities designed to eliminate the chief causes of instability in the developing world.

***The Battle of the Generals: The Untold Story of the Falaise Pocket—The Campaign That Should Have Won World War II.* By Martin Blumenson. William Morrow, 1994. 288 Pages. $22.00. Reviewed by Lieutenant Colonel Albert N. Garland, U.S. Army, Retired.**

This book's subtitle is a bit misleading. Over the course of many years, the author has written extensively on this particular World War II battle—the Allied attempt to bag the German armies in Normandy that took place in August 1944. What he does do in this, his latest effort to explain why the Allied armies failed to close the Argentan-Falaise pocket, is to come down squarely on the side of George Patton, the flamboyant commander of the U.S. Third Army. Patton claimed (in his diary, at least) that his army could have cleared up the Falaise mess and bagged all the Germans at the same time if his U.S. superior, Omar Bradley, and the Britisher, Bernard Montgomery, had followed his plans. The author believes that if Patton had had his way, the war in western Europe would have been over; Germany would have had to give up the fight, because it would have lacked the trained manpower and battle equipment to continue.

Perhaps. But the author makes a number of questionable assumptions and fails to address such important items as the problems inherent in conducting coalition warfare and the one that plagues every dashing military commander—logistics.

Admittedly, the author makes a persuasive case. He is a far better writer than most military historians, a trait most readers will find enjoyable. One could wish for more maps, but this seems a common cry among reviewers of military histories. Certainly the author knows his subject—and his man Patton. Yet his failure to properly address all of the air aspects of the battle and the later effort at the Seine River, as well as the beliefs of the various air commanders, seems a definite weakness in his narrative.

His word portraits of the four major commanders—Eisenhower, Montgomery, Bradley, and Patton—are finely drawn. I find it hard to believe, however, that if Patton had been in Bradley's shoes he could have "worked closely and effectively" with Montgomery, particularly if the latter had retained his command over all Allied ground forces in the theater. Their dislike for each other dated at least to the Sicily campaign during the summer of 1943, in which Montgomery's actions and ability to sway Harold Alexander caused the campaign to drag on unnecessarily for more weeks than anticipated. Patton detested Montgomery, and the feeling was mutual.

Despite certain of my misgivings, I do recommend this book for reading by all infantrymen. There is much the author has to offer concerning high command in battle. I suggest, however, that the reader study the battle in greater detail before tackling this book, and the author's select bibliography is a good place to start.

***Ironclad of the Roanoke: Gilbert Elliott's Albemarle.* By Robert G. Elliott. White Mane Publishing Company (P.O. Box 152, Shippensburg, PA 17257), 1994. 372 Pages. $29.95.** Reviewed by Dr. Ralph W. Widener, Jr., Dallas, Texas.

Historian Shelby Foote, in the October 1994 issue of *Naval History*, says that naval matters have received scant attention in writings about the U.S. Civil War and that this should be remedied. As if he anticipated Foote's remark, Robert G. Elliott has written about the *Albemarle*, one of the best ironclads built by the Confederacy, and about the resourceful man who built her.

The author, a World War II veteran who later worked on the Apollo moon project, is a collateral descendant of Gilbert Elliott, the man who conceived the *Albemarle* and saw to its construction under the most trying conditions.

Gilbert Elliott was just 18 years old when he convinced the Confederate Naval Department he could be relied upon to deliver an ironclad ram to counter the Union's North Atlantic Blockading Squadron. After all, he was descended from a long line of shipwrights who had built successful trading vessels. Even so, he faced many obstacles building the ship: a lack of experienced workers, the difficulty of obtaining needed materials (especially iron), and the ever-present danger that his shipyard (built in a cornfield) might be captured by the enemy. Despite these problems and many others, the ram was completed on time.

This book provides a good account of the *Albemarle's* baptism of fire at Plymouth, North Carolina, where, on 19 April 1864, she rammed and sank the USS *Southbridge*, and damaged the USS *Miami*.

On 5 May 1864 the *Albemarle* faced seven U.S. Navy ships in Albemarle Sound. She withstood a ramming by one ship and was surrounded by three others that had a combined displacement of more than 2,900 tons to her own 376 tons. She severely damaged the USS *Sassacus* and then proudly steamed off under her own power. The commander of the Sassacus later wrote, "I am forced to think that *Albemarle* is more formidable than the *Merrimack* or *Atlanta*, for our solid 100-pounder rifle shot flew into splinters upon her iron plates."

The book describes the *Albemarle's* demise on a rainy morning, 28 October 1864. U.S. Navy Lieutenant W.B. Cushing and his force came up the Roanoke River to Plymouth, approached under heavy fire from the Confederate ram, and detonated a torpedo under her hull.

Elliott's book is exciting reading, from the original idea for building the *Albemarle* to the time it was broken up for scrap. It is a "must read" book for anyone interested in the total history of the U.S. Civil War.

***Soldiering in the Army of Tennessee: A Portrait of Life in a Confederate Army.* By Larry J. Daniel. University of North Carolina Press, 1991. 231 Pages. $22.50.** Reviewed by Major Don Rightmyer, U.S. Air Force, Retired.

The first major studies of the Civil War soldier's life were *The Life of Billy Yank* and *The Life of Johnny Reb*, by Dr. Bell I. Wiley, published in the 1940s and 1950s. More recently, similar accounts have been written by Dr. James I. Robertson and Reid Mitchell. Most of the studies, however, have focussed primarily on the Union and Confederate armies in the eastern theater of the war, largely neglecting the men who fought in the campaigns west of the Appalachians. Larry Daniel has remedied part of that problem by providing this book on the men who served in the Confederate Army of Tennessee.

Daniel has already demonstrated his knowledge of the Army of Tennessee with *Cannoneers in Gray*, his excellent book on its artillery arm. For this book on soldier life, he uses the letters, diaries, and personal memoirs of more than 350 participants. Most of the men he quotes served in the rank of captain or below.

The normal things that make up the daily life and experiences of a combat soldier, no matter what the time period, fill most of this book: uniforms and equipment, daily routine, small arms, rations, sickness, recreation, discipline, religion, morale, and combat experience.

The author points out one significant difference between this army and Robert E. Lee's eastern Army of Northern Virginia: Lee's men were inspired by their leader's example and motivation from the Seven Days campaign all the way to Appomattox. In comparison, the Army of Tennessee had several different commanders during its time of service, the longest period being under Braxton Bragg, who caused considerable dissension and unrest throughout the army.

This book provides a good look at the American fighting man of the 1860s. It adds flesh and bone to the stories of the soldiers who fought at Perryville, Stone's River, Chickamauga, Missionary Ridge, the Atlanta campaign, and other significant battlefields of the western theater.

***Destroyer of the Iron Horse: General Joseph E. Johnston and Confederate Rail Transport, 1861-1865.* By Jeffrey N. Lash. Kent State University Press, 1991. 228 Pages. $28.00.** Reviewed by Major Don Rightmyer, U.S. Air Force, Retired.

A military leader's ability in the area of logistics has frequently meant the difference between success and failure throughout the history of warfare. This book provides a case study of one leader, Confederate General Joseph E. Johnston, and his experiences with rail transport in the two major theaters of the Civil War.

In preparing this book, Jeffrey Lash, an archivist in the National Archives in Washington, D.C., has used the primary historical documents on this subject in the archives as well as numerous other sources.

As an Army captain, Johnston learned the details of railway construction, materials, and use in the years before the war when he was assigned to work with exploration parties in the western territories of the United States. He bombarded the War Department's railway experts with queries so he would be well-prepared to do his job. The application of the knowledge he gained during that time, however, seems to have had mixed results during his years as a senior Confederate leader.

One of the first noteworthy uses of rail transport during the war was the efficient and timely movement of Johnston's troops from a remote corner of Virginia, which allowed them to fight at First Manassas. Some time later in the same region, however, Johnston allowed the use of rolling stock that was far too heavy, and it crushed the tracks in his area of operations.

Destroyer of the Iron Horse looks at Johnston's use of rail transport in Virginia, the Mississippi valley, the Georgia-Atlanta campaign, and the retreat through the Carolinas. Much of the problem with using the railways under his control stemmed from incompetence and mismanagement among those assigned to supervise the rail movements as well as the constant pull-and-tug between the competing demands of military and civil interests.

This is a more specialized history than the average Civil War fare, but it will be of special interest to anyone interested in the history of military logistics. It is nicely written, thoroughly documented, and well augmented by several excellent maps of the rail networks throughout the Civil War South.

***The AEF and Coalition Warmaking, 1917-1918.* By David F. Trask. University Press of Kansas, 1993. 236 Pages. $29.95.** Reviewed by Dr. Charles E. White, Infantry School Historian.

This book is a refreshingly new interpretation of the final year of World War I. David Trask focuses on the Allied and American high commands, linking events on the battlefield to war aims and strategy. In doing so, he demonstrates a mastery of both the diplomatic and the military aspects of the war. His conclusions are likely to startle many admirers of General John J. Pershing.

Beginning with the mobilization of the American Expeditionary Force (AEF) in 1917, Trask leads the reader through an amazing series of events that reveal a story of U.S. participation in the Great War that is completely different from the one Pershing tells in his final report of 1919 and in his 1931 memoirs. According to Pershing, the AEF assured victory for the Allies, despite War Department bumbling at home and perverse Allied interference abroad. In the end, it was the superior quality of the AEF that overcame all obstacles and led the Allies to victory in 1918.

But Trask concludes that Pershing might have been relieved of command if the war had continued into 1919. Pershing was making quite a fool of himself in France.

Although he considered his sustained resistance to "amalgamation" (the idea of deploying American troops to Europe organized in divisions or smaller units for service under French or British command) a great achievement, French Marshal Ferdinand Foch and British Field Marshal Sir Douglas Haig did not. Looking at the extent of the emergency in 1918, when the Germans launched their spring offensive, Trask demonstrates that Pershing's intransigence placed a severe strain on the Allied coalition and actually hurt the fighting quality of the AEF.

When the AEF was eventually deployed, it lacked the combat experience it might have gained if Pershing had placed American units under French and British control for both training and limited combat service. Moreover, the AEF had neither the support troops nor the logistical facilities to sustain independent operations. Of course, when these deficiencies manifested themselves in combat, Pershing's response was to relieve frontline commanders whose troops had not performed to his expectations. This shocked the other Allied commanders and even President Woodrow Wilson, who began to sense Pershing's limitations.

In fairness to Pershing, President Wilson had given him strict guidance to maintain the independence of the AEF. Wilson wanted to prove to the French and British that the AEF decided the outcome of the war, believing this would give him the diplomatic edge during peace negotiations. But Pershing had also been given the latitude to amend Wilson's guidance as the situation warranted. Indeed, when the French and British begged him for replacement troops in 1918, Pershing responded by sending them black American units.

Pershing's personal shortcomings really revealed themselves in the latter days of the war. On several occasions, he violated his charter and angered both Wilson and Secretary of War Newton Baker, as well as other Allied leaders. First, Pershing overstepped his military authority by advocating the unconditional surrender of all German forces. Then he foolishly tried to deprive the French army of the honor of re-occupying Sedan. Lastly, in November 1918, when the Germans sought an armistice, Pershing wanted to fight on, so that the AEF could prove with deeds the excellence he had already claimed for it. Fortunately for Pershing, the Allied victory masked these flagrant transgressions.

Trask demonstrates that the most important American contribution to victory was not its combat performance as Pershing claimed but the fresh troops and massive material aid. After four years of attrition warfare, U.S. intervention turned the tide in favor of the Allies. Unfortunately, Wilson obtained little diplomatic clout from this contribution.

The AEF and Coalition Warmaking is one of the finest analyses of American participation in World War I. By carefully examining the documents, Trask has produced an outstanding book that sheds welcome light on the AEF and its commander.

RECENT AND RECOMMENDED

Time Heals No Wounds. **By Jack Leninger. Ballantine, 1993. 317 Pages. $4.99, Softbound.**

The World Factbook, 1993-94. **Central Intelligence Agency. Brassey's (US), 1993. 439 Pages. $30.00.**

No Longer Enemies, Not Yet Friends: An American Soldier Returns to Vietnam. **By Frederick Downs. Pocket Books, 1993. 405 Pages. $5.99.**

The Guns of the South. **By Harry Turtledove. Ballantine, 1993. 561 Pages. $5.99.**

Courage in the Skies: Great Air Battles From the Somme to DESERT STORM. **By J.E. "Johnnie" Johnson and P.B. "Laddie" Lucas. Stanley Paul, 1993 (distributed by Trafalgar Square, North Pomfret, VT 05053). 208 Pages.**

Rangers at War: LRRPs in Vietnam. **By Shelby L. Stanton. Ivy Books, 1993. $4.99, Softbound.**

Brave Men, Dark Waters: The Untold Story of the Navy SEALs. **By Orr Kelly. Pocket Books, 1993. $5.99, Softbound.**

50 Mission Crush. **By Lieutenant Colonel Donald R. Currier, USAF (Retired). Pocket Books, 1993. 170 Pages. $5.95.**

SNAFU: Great American Military Disasters. **By Geoffrey Regan. Avon Books, 1993. 295 Pages. $10.00, Softbound.**

The Soviet Military Encyclopedia. By William C. Green and W. Robert Reeves. **Westview Press, 1993. Four-volume Set, 1,600 Pages. $375.00.**

Twentieth Century American Wars. **By Wilbur H. Morrison. Hippocrene Books, 1993. 456 Pages. $29.50.**

War Heroes: True Stories of Congressional Medal of Honor Recipients. **By Kent DeLong. Praeger Trade, 1993. 224 Pages. $17.95.**

U.S. Army Signals Intelligence in World War II: A Documentary History. **By John P. Finnegan and James L. Gilbert. U.S. Army Center of Military History, 1993. (GPO S/N 008-029-00250-7) 237 Pages. $24.00.**

General Matthew B. Ridgway: An Annotated Bibliography. **Compiled by Paul M. Edwards. Bibliographies of Battles and Leaders, Number 8. Greenwood Press, 1993. 144 Pages. $55.00.**

One Tough Marine. **By First Sergeant Donald N. Hamblen, USMC (Retired) and Major B. H. Norton, USMC (Retired). Ballantine, 1993. 337 Pages. $22.50, Hardcover.**

Shadow of Death. **By W. Paul Hughes. Bridge Publishing Company (2500 Hamilton Blvd., South Plainfield, NJ 07080), 1993. 254 Pages.**

An Irishman in the Iron Brigade: The Civil War Memoirs of James P. Sullivan, Sergt., 6th Wisconsin Vollunteers. **By Willliam J.K. Beaudot and Lance J. Herdegan. Irish in the Civil War Series, Number 3. Fordham University Press, 1993. 189 Pages. $27.50.**

To the Point: The United States Military Academy, 1802-1902. **By George S. Pappas. Praeger, 1993. 528 Pages. $55.00.**

Battling Buzzards: The Odyssey of the 517th Regimental Combat Team, 1943-1945. **By Gerald Astor. Donald I. Fine, 1993. 338 Pages. $23.95.**

Combating Air Terrorism. **By Rodney Wallis. Brassey's (US), 1993. 224 Pages. $40.00.**

Skip Bombing. **By James T. Murphy with A. B. Feuer. Praeger, 1993. 200 Pages. $45.00.**

A Borrowed Place: The History of Hong Kong. **By Frank Welsh. Kodansha America, Inc., 1993. 640 Pages. $32.50.**

The Best and the Brightest. **By David Halberstam. Originally published in 1973. Fawcett Columbine, 1993. 720 Pages. $15.00, Softbound.**

The Santiago Campaign of 1898: A Soldier's View of the Spanish-American War. **By A.B. Feuer. Praeger, 1993. 216 Pages. $47.95.**

Colin Powell. **By Howard Means. Ballantine, 1993. 337 Pages. $5.99, Softbound.**

On Artillery. **By Bruce I. Gudmundsson. Praeger, 1993. 192 Pages. $16.95, Softbound.**

The Pusan Perimeter, Korea, 1950: An Annotated Bibliography. **Compiled by Paul M. Edwards. Bibliographies of Battles and Leaders, Number 11. Greenwood Press, 1993. 160 Pages. $55.00.**

Marshalling the Faithful: The Marines' First Year In Vietnam. **By Charles W. Henderson. Berkeley, 1993. 460 Pages. $5.99, Softbound.**

The Bridge at Remagen. **By Ken Hechler. First published in 1957. Pictorial Histories Publishing Co., Inc. (713 South Third Street, Missoula, MT 59801), 1993. 232 Pages. $12.95, Softbound.**

The Field Artillery History and Sourcebook. **By Boyd L. Dastrup. Greenwood Press, 1993. 240 Pages. $65.00.**

Suddenly We Didn't Want to Die: Memoirs of a World War I Marine. **By Elton E. Mackin. Presidio Press, 1993. 272 Pages. $19.95.**

Peacekeepers and Their Wives: American Participation in the Multinational Force and Observers. **By David R. Segal and Mady Wechsler Segal. Contributions in Military Studies, Number 147. Greenwood Press, 1993. 200 Pages. $49.95.**

James B. Conant: Harvard to Hiroshima and the Making of the Nuclear Age. **By James G. Hershberg. Knopf, 1993. 1,024 Pages. $35.00.**

"We'll Stand By the Union": Robert Gould Shaw and the Black 54th Massachusetts Regiment. **By Peter Burchard. Facts On File, 1993. 128 Pages.**

War in Europe: North African Struggle. **Volume 5. By Edwin P. Hoyt. Avon Books, 1993. 147 Pages. $4.99.**

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